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BLACK MAGICK™

GREG RUCKA • NICOLA SCOTT

VOLUME 001

AWAKENING

PORTSMOUTH POLICE

0333

BLACK MAGICK™

Created by Greg Rucka and Nicola Scott

VOLUME 1: "AWAKENING"

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Issue 001 “A” Cover by **NICOLA SCOTT**

Mabon (Fall Equinox)

"NOW THE WORLD IS IN BALANCE, AT THIS MOMENT, IN THIS AGE, IN THIS PLACE. DAY AND NIGHT EQUAL IN EACH OTHERS' SIGHT...

"...THE LADY AND THE LORD ENTWINED AND ENTRANCED, BELOVED AND BELONGING...

...THEIR UNION SACRED, ETERNAL, AND YET EVER-CHANGING IN ITS CYCLE.

NOW THE LORD WANES IN HIS POWER, FADING UNTO SAMHAIN.

NOW THE LADY IN HER GLORY, RIPE FOR HIS REBIRTHING TO COME, WISE IN THE WAY OF ALL SEASONS.

THIS NIGHT, THIS TIME, SO SACRED IN ITS PERFECT BALANCE BETWEEN THAT WORLD OF SPIRIT AND THIS OF FLESH.

THIS NIGHT, OUR HAVEN, ONE OF BUT TWO EQUALS IN OUR ENDLESS AND ETERNAL CYCLE.

THIS NIGHT, WE WORK OUR WILL.

SO MOTE IT BE.

SO MOTE IT BE.

SO MOTE IT BE.

SO MOTE IT BE.

FAREWELL, O SUN, EVER-RETURNING LIGHT!

THE HIDDEN GOD, WHO EVER YET REMAINS!

HE NOW DEPARTS TO THE LAND OF YOUTH, THROUGH THE GATES OF DEATH TO DWELL....

da-dee-da-da-dee-dee

...ENTHRONED, THE JUDGE OF GODS, OF WOMEN...

da-da-da-dee-dee

...OF MEN, ALL RIGHT, WHO THE HELL FORGOT TO TURN OFF THEIR FUCKING PHONE?

da-da-dah

da-dee-da..

YEAH, THAT'S ME...

SOMEBODY HAD BETTER HAVE FUCKING DIED--

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO REDRAW THE CIRCLE, WE'LL HAVE TO CALL QUARTERS AGAIN--

I KNOW.

THE WHOLE RITUAL--

I KNOW.

...THAT WAS WORK...

...I'VE GOT TO GO.

MAKE SURE YOU GROUND YOURSELF BEFORE YOU LEAVE.

BUDDY BURGER

THIS AREA IS CLOSED OFF, YOU'LL HAVE TO--

--DETECTIVE BLACK, SORRY, DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU!

THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU AT THE COMMAND POST.

MORGAN!

RO, WHERE--

YOU FUCKING TOOK YOUR TIME.

I WAS KINDA IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING, CAPTAIN.

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT? IS THAT INCENSE?

YOU SMELL LIKE A HEADSHOP, PARTNER.

NEW SOAP. SOMEONE GOING TO TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?

PUT THIS ON AND LISTEN.

WHENEVER YOU'RE READY, PETE.

YOU STILL THERE, SON?

OF COURSE I'M STILL HERE, YOU FUCKING IDIOT...

...WHERE THE **HELL** AM I GOING TO **GO?**

DID YOU **FIND** HER? IS SHE **THERE?**

SHE'S ON HER WAY, LIKE I TOLD YOU.

YOU SAID THAT AN **HOUR** AGO!

I NEED TO TALK TO HER! I **HAVE** TO TALK TO HER!

SOON AS SHE GETS HERE I'LL PUT HER ON, I SWEAR IT, SON.

BUT YOU'VE GOT TO **GIVE** US SOMETHING, **FIRST.** THAT'S ONLY FAIR, DON'T YOU THINK?

WHY DON'T YOU LET ONE OF THE HOSTAGES **GO?**

*NOT UNTIL I **TALK** TO **HER!***

WON'T GIVE HIS NAME. FOUR HOSTAGES. DEMANDS TO TALK TO YOU. YOU KNOW THIS GUY?

JUST ONE OF THE HOSTAGES, SON.

*YOU'RE NOT **LISTENING** TO ME!*

No idea!

*YOU'RE **NOT** LISTENING!*

WHY AREN'T YOU **LISTENING?**

I AM LISTENING, SON.

PUSH

THEN LET ME **TALK** TO HER...

...SHE'S **HERE,** ISN'T SHE? SHE'S OUT THERE RIGHT **NOW.**

POLICE

PUT HER ON THE FUCKING PHONE!!!!

P.P.D.

I'M HERE.

WE HAVE TO TALK. I HAVE TO TALK TO YOU.

HEY, YOU'VE GOT THE **HOSTAGES**...

...I'M **ALL EARS.**

NIIIICE, DETECTIVE BLACK.

NO, NO, YOU **DON'T** UNDERSTAND.

ALONE. WE HAVE TO TALK **ALONE.**

YOU HAVE TO COME **INSIDE.**

WE HAVE TO TALK **ALONE.**

NOT A **CHANCE,** NO **WAY.**

YOU'RE SAYING WE HAVE TO TALK **ALONE.**

BUT I'M HEARING YOU HAVE **FOUR** HOSTAGES IN THERE, MAN.

THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A LOT OF **PRIVACY** TO ME.

*I'LL RELEASE THEM. **ALL** OF THEM...*

"...BUT WE HAVE TO TALK ALONE."

SWAT

YOU PULL HIM INTO SIGHT OF THE **WINDOWS**, SNIPERS WILL DO **REST**.

IT GOES TITS UP, SAY "AVALANCHE," YOUR **WIRE** WILL PICK IT UP, WE'LL COME IN WITH GAS AND FLASH-BANGS.

WHY AM I DOING THIS AGAIN?

THIS WOULD BE THE '**PROTECT**' PART OF 'PROTECT AND SERVE.'

Ah.

THERE'S SOMETHING **OFF** WITH THIS GUY.

I THINK TAKING **HOSTAGES** WAS THE FIRST **CLUE**.

THERE'S **NOTHING** FUNNY ABOUT THIS, DETECTIVE BLACK.

HE TAKES A BURGER JOINT HOSTAGE JUST TO GET **FACE-TIME** WITH YOU?

WON'T GIVE HIS **NAME**, KNOWS OUR PLAYBOOK ENOUGH TO STAY **AWAY** FROM THE WINDOWS.

THE SON OF A BITCH CALLED **US**, YOU GET ME?

I GOT A BAD FEELING WHAT HAPPENS YOU WALK IN THERE.

REAL BAD FEELING.

I'LL BE OKAY, PETE.

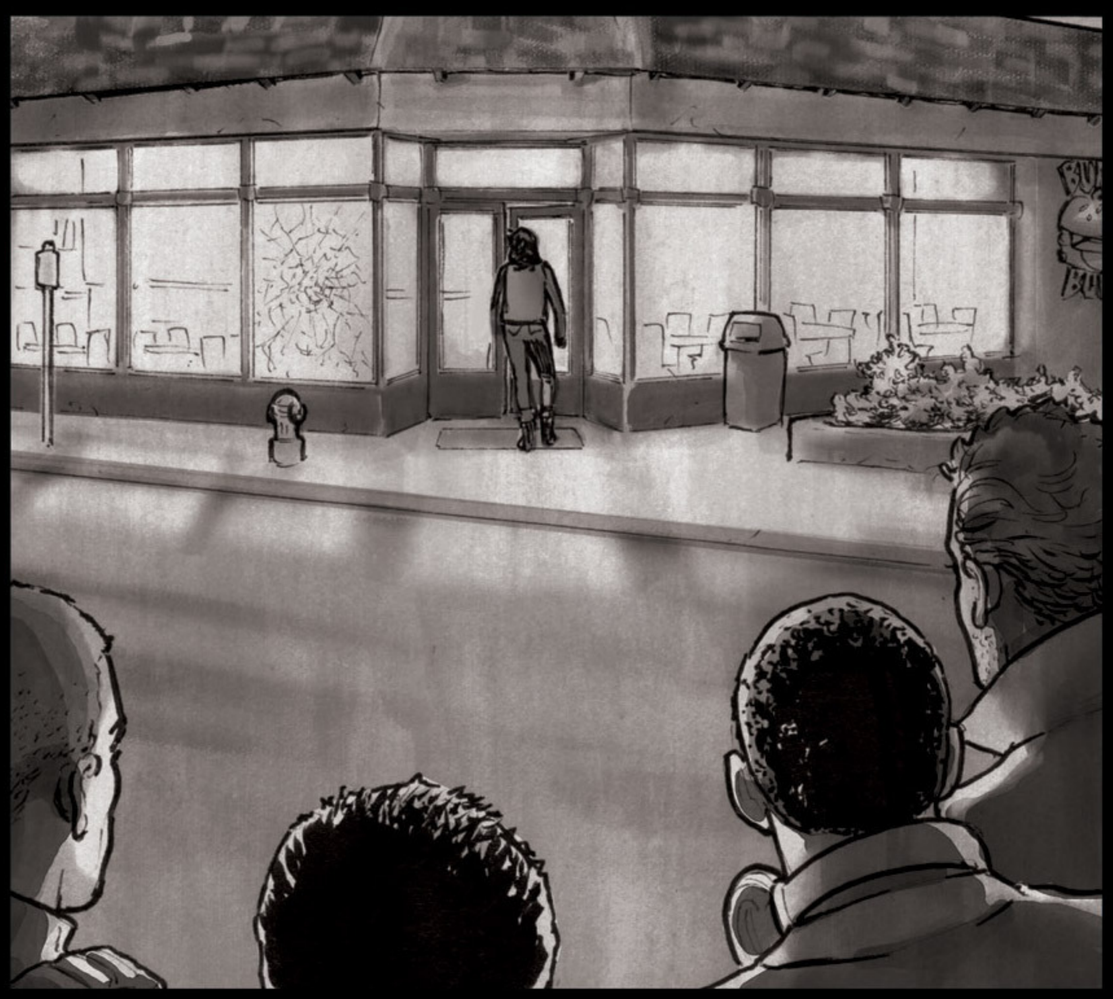
YOU GET THE HOSTAGES OUT FIRST, THEN YOU GET YOURSELF **OUT**.

WAY AHEAD OF YOU ON THAT, CAPTAIN.

GOOD GIRL.

RIGHT.

LET'S WALK THE WALK.



THAT'S IT...

...SHE'S IN.

COMING IN.

I'M ALONE.

HANDS AT YOUR NECK. COME BACK HERE.

IS THAT... SMELLS LIKE...

...AM I SMELLING KEROSENE?

MOTHER-FUCKER.

IF HE'S SOAKED THE PLACE, WE THROW GAS OR FLASH-BANGS...

Fwoosh, YEAH.

I SAID...

...COME INTO THE BACK.

PUSH

YOU SAID YOU'D LET--

IN.

THE.

BACK.

PUSH

Oh, LADY.

GET UNDRESSED.

WHAT?

NOBODY CAN **HEAR**. I HAVE TO MAKE **SURE**...

THE **HOSTAGES**, YOU'VE GOT--

AS SOON AS YOU'RE UNDRESSED, THEY CAN **GO**.

ALL RIGHT.

NOW.

LET THEM GO.

LISTEN CLOSELY.

I'M GOING TO SEND THEM OUT ONE AT A TIME...

POLICE

FIRE AND EMS STANDING BY.

...ANYONE ENTERS THE STREET, COMES TO MEET THEM BEFORE THEY REACH YOU...

...I SHOOT DETECTIVE BLACK IN THE **FACE.**

LET ME HEAR YOU SAY YOU **UNDERSTAND.**

WE UNDERSTAND.

SHREDDER

SWAT

WE'RE GONNA GET YOU OUT OF THESE CLOTHES--

NEED A MEDIC!

I NEED TO TALK TO--

THEY'VE ALL GOT TO BE DECONNED, CAPTAIN...

...YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IT AT THE HOSPITAL.

WHAT DOES THIS GUY WANT?

I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HE WANTS!

HER, MAN...

"...HE WANTS HER..."

PUSH

PUSH

SO...

...YOU HAVE A NAME?

YOU CAN'T HAVE IT.

I KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH IT, YOU CAN'T HAVE IT.

I KNOW ALL SORTS OF THINGS, DETECTIVE ROWAN BLACK.

JUST... JUST STAY CALM...

I KNOW WHAT YOU DO IN THE DARK, THE MAGICK YOU WORK...

...I KNOW WHAT YOU REALLY ARE... WHO YOU REALLY ARE...

...I KNOW YOUR TRUENAME...

...I DON'T KNOW YOU I'VE NEVER MET YOU...

...HOW ...HOW DO YOU KNOW--

THEY TOLD ME...

...THEY TOLD ME EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU--

--MOVE--

--ALL ABOUT YOU...

...WITCH.

WHO? WHO TOLD YOU?

WHO ARE YOU?

YOU KNOW HOW TO GET RID OF A WITCH, DON'T YOU?

YOU DO.

YOU KNOW.

NO...YOU CAN'T BE ONE OF THEM, ONE OF THEIRS--

YOU KNOW!

YOU BURN HER.

ALIVE.

DON'T...

...DON'T DO THIS, YOU DON'T WANT TO DO TH--

I DON'T HAVE A FUCKING CHOICE!

I CAN'T--

--I CAN'T STOP--

--THEY'RE RIDING ME THEY'RE INSIDE--

WHO? TELL ME WHO, TELL ME YOUR NAME, ANYTHING--

--WON'T LET ME, WON'T LET ME GO, IF I DO THIS THEY'LL LET ME GO--

--HELP ME IF... IF YOU ARE WHAT THEY SAY YOU ARE YOU CAN HELP ME YOU CAN...

...PLEASE...

...HELP ME....

I'M SORRY.

I CAN'T.

FUCKING--

--BITCH!

DON'T. DON'T.

By my will, from my breath...

...the flame you strike shall bring your death.

DON'T DO IT. DON'T MAKE ME DO THIS.

PLEASE.

ALEX?
IT'S ME.

IT'S
STARTING
AGAIN.

HOMICIDE REPORT

NB 105

E DEPARTMENT

CITY OF PORTSMOU

S PERSON KILLED | FIRST NAME | MIDDLE NAME | RACE | SEX | AGE | RESIDENCE OF PERSON KILLED | OFFENSE SERIAL NO.

TITLE OR RELATIONSHIP | RACE | SEX | AGE | ADDRESS OF PERSON KILLED | PHONE OF PERSON

EPORTED (CRIME) | AFTER INVESTIGATION CHANGED TO

CURENCE — STREET AND NUMBER OR INTERSECTION | DIVISION | PLATOON | BEAT | OFFICERS MAKING REPORT | I.D. NO. | NAME

DATE OF OCCURENCE | TIME OF DAY | DATE REPORTED | TIME REPORTED | REPORT RECEIVED BY | RECEIVED — TIME — TYPED

DESCRIPTION OF DEAD PERSON

GHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | BEARD | COMPLEXION | IDENTIFYING SCARS, MARKS, ETC. | CLOTHING

TIFIED | NAME OF CORONER ATTENDING — TIME OF ARRIVAL | NAME OF PROSECUTOR ATTENDING — TIME OF ARRIVAL

A.M.
P.M.

D DEAD BY PHYSICIAN | PERSON WITH WHOM ACCUSED LIVED OR ASSOCIATED

FENSE (GIVE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OCCURENCE OF OFFENSE AND ITS INVESTIGATION) | USE BOTH SIDES OF THIS SHEET

N INTO CUSTODY | ADDRESS | WITNESS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY | ADDRESS

ECTED OR POSSIBLE MOTIVES

DESCRIPTION OF SUSPECTS OR PERSONS WANTED

WN | ALIAS | ADDRESS | SEX | RACE | AGE | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | COMPLEXION

TIVITY | OCCUPATION | DRESS AND OTHER MARKS | CAUSE FOR SUSPICION

WN | ALIAS | ADDRESS | SEX | RACE | AGE | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | COMPLEXION

TIVITY | OCCUPATION | DRESS AND OTHER MARKS | CAUSE FOR SUSPICION

Issue 002 “A” Cover by **NICOLA SCOTT**

"...WITH DETECTIVES HAIGHT AND FIEGLEY SERVING A WARRANT ON THE KURTZFELDT CASE IN BUTCHER THIS MORNING.

"TACTICAL WILL BE PROVIDING SUPPORT.

"FREEMAN, YOU AND INNES ARE IN COURT THIS MORNING--YOU CAN **STOP GRINNING,** BRIAN--WHICH PULLS YOU OUT OF SERVICE UNTIL THE AFTERNOON.

"THIS MEANS THAT CHAFFEY AND BLACK ARE TOP OF THE ROTATION WHILE PERRINI AND COLT HEAD UP THE INVESTIGATION OF LAST NIGHT'S **CRISPY CRITTER.** NICHOLE? YOU'RE PRIMARY.

"TO **RECAP** THE EVENTS OF LAST NIGHT FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO'VE BEEN HEARING RUMORS AND **NOT** FACTS, WE HAD A SITUATION AT THE BUDDY BURGER ON MCKENNA.

"AN AS-YET-UNIDENTIFIED WHITE MALE, APPROXIMATELY MID-20S, TOOK STAFF **HOSTAGE** SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT. HE HELD THEM AT GUNPOINT, THEN **DOUSED** THEM WITH **ACCELERANT.**

"THE PERP THEN DEMANDED A MEETING WITH OUR VERY OWN DETECTIVE BLACK, WHO ENTERED THE ESTABLISHMENT TO SECURE THE **RELEASE** OF THE HOSTAGES.

"SHORTLY **AFTER** THE LAST HOSTAGE WAS RELEASED, THE PERPETRATOR **SET HIMSELF ON FIRE.**

DETECTIVE BLACK SUFFERED FROM FIRST-DEGREE BURNS TO HER EXTREMITIES AND SMOKE INHALATION, BUT WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE THE **FIRE.**

AT THIS TIME WE HAVE **NO** MOTIVE AND **NO** IDENTIFICATION OF THIS INDIVIDUAL.

DETECTIVE BLACK **ASSURES** ME THAT SHE HAD **NEVER** ENCOUNTERED THIS GUY BEFORE, PEOPLE, AND I **BELIEVE** HER.

IF THIS WAS SOME **BLUE SUICIDE,** I WANT TO KNOW. IF THIS WAS SOMETHING **ELSE,** I WANT TO KNOW...

...IF THIS WAS JUST SOME GUY WHO PULLED DETECTIVE BLACK'S **NAME** OFF THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE, I **WANT TO KNOW.**

RIVERA IS HEADING UP THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S INVESTIGATION, YOU'LL WANT TO COORDINATE WITH HIM ON HIS **FINDINGS.**

THINKING WE'LL START AT THE M.E.'S OFFICE, SEE IF WE CAN'T GET AN I.D. ON THE BODY, FIRST.

YOUR **CASE,** RUN IT HOW YOU LIKE. FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THIS IS OPEN-AND-SHUT, SO THE SOONER YOU GET THE **BLANKS** FILLED-IN, THE SOONER WE CAN LET IT **DROP.**

THAT'S IT, GET TO IT...

...DETECTIVE BLACK, I WILL SEE YOU IN MY **OFFICE,** PLEASE.

YES, SIR.

HOW YOU FEELING, ROWAN?

A LITTLE TOASTY, BUT I'M GOOD TO GO.

CAPTAIN Justin PEGG

"TOASTY."

JUST A BIT.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO BE A LITTLE LESS GLIB WHEN YOU TALK TO I.A.B.

PRESTES IS EXPECTING YOU AT TEN.

WHY AM I TALKING TO I.A.B.?

BECAUSE YOU WERE THE LAST PERSON TO SEE OUR JOHN DOE ALIVE.

THEY'RE TREATING IT AS AN **OFFICER-INVOLVED** DEATH.

RELAX, DETECTIVE BLACK, IT'S **ROUTINE.**

YES, SIR.

IS THAT EVERYTHING, SIR?

THAT IS EVERYTHING, DETECTIVE.

NOW LEAVE MY OFFICE...

...AND TELL YOUR **PARTNER** TO STOP **EAVESDROPPING** ON MY CONVERSATIONS.

NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, CAP.

SO I.A.B.?

IT'S I.A.B.

IT'S ROUTINE, MORGAN.

YOU'RE **WORRIED** ABOUT ME...

...THAT'S SO **SWEET.**

SWEET FOR **YOU,** SPICY FOR EVERYONE **ELSE.**

I'LL TELL ANNA YOU SAID THAT.

I **MISSPOKE.**

SWEET FOR YOU AND MY **WIFE.** EVERYONE ELSE, THEY GET THE **SPICY.**

PITY.

I **PREFER** THE SPICY--

--SHIT, I'M **LATE** TO TALK TO PRESTES--

--I SHOULD BE BACK AFTER **NOON.**

AFTER NOON? SOMETHING I SHOULD **KNOW** ABOUT?

MEETING A FRIEND FOR LUNCH, DETECTIVE...

...DON'T BE SO **JEALOUS!**

--HOW THE FIRE STARTED?

INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU

Inspector F. Prestes
Inspector N. Bellowes

NO, I KNOW **EXACTLY** HOW IT STARTED, INSPECTOR.

THE SON OF A BITCH DROPPED A **LIT** ZIPPO WHILE STANDING IN A PUDDLE OF **KEROSENE.**

The Portsmouth Crier
Hostages Downtown

YOU THINK IT WAS **DELIBERATE?** THAT HE WANTED TO **KILL** HIMSELF?

I DO. WHY HE WANTED TO DO IT IN FRONT OF **ME,** NO IDEA.

I CAN STILL SMELL HIM **BURNING...**

...THE SMELL OF **FLESH** BURNING...

...FUCKING HELL...

YOU NEED A MINUTE, DETECTIVE BLACK?

NO, I'M GOOD. JUST... CAN'T IMAGINE A WORSE PAIN, YOU KNOW?

I UNDERSTAND.

YOU'D NEVER SEEN THIS GUY BEFORE? NOT EVEN FOR A MOMENT, NOTHING LIKE THAT?

CROSS MY HEART AND HOPE TO DIE, LAST NIGHT WAS THE FIRST TIME.

VERY PAGAN OF YOU, DETECTIVE.

I'M SORRY?

THAT'S A PAGAN OATH. "CROSS MY HEART AND HOPE TO DIE."

I WOULDN'T **KNOW.**

NATE SPENT THE LAST HOUR **ONLINE,** TRYING TO FIND **SIGNIFICANCE** IN **THIS** SYMBOL...

...DON'T SUPPOSE **YOU** CAN SATISFY HIS **CURIOSITY?**

IT'S A **HAMMER?** GUY WAS A **MASON?**

THE MASONS USE THE **COMPASS** AND **SQUARE,** PRIMARILY.

SO HE JUST PULLED THE **LIGHTER,** LIT IT, AND THAT WAS ALL SHE WROTE?

THERE WAS SOME RANTING FIRST. I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND HIM. HE WASN'T MAKING MUCH SENSE, INSPECTOR PRESTES.

AND YOU DIDN'T TRY TO **STOP** HIM?

HE WAS POINTING A **GUN** AT ME WHEN HE DID IT, INSPECTOR BELLOWES.

MY LIFE OR **HIS,** WASN'T MUCH A CHOICE TO MAKE.

NO, DON'T IMAGINE THERE **WAS.**

THANKS FOR COMING IN, DETECTIVE BLACK. WE'LL CONTACT YOU IF WE HAVE **FURTHER** QUESTIONS.

THAT'S IT?

UNLESS THERE'S SOMETHING YOU FEEL WE SHOULD **KNOW,** DETECTIVE.

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU FEEL WE SHOULD **KNOW?**

THAT'S IT.

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

...HISTORY IS ONE OF **CO-OPTING**, EVEN **STEALING**, THE RITUAL AND SYMBOLISM OF OTHER RELIGIONS.

ARE WE DISCUSSING **THEOLOGY** OR **HISTORY**, NOW, ALEX?

DOESN'T THE **LATTER** INFLUENCE THE **FORMER**, FATHER?

Boil & Bubble

LOOK AT CALVIN AND HOBBES. BILL WATTERSON SPENT HIS **CAREER** REFUSING TO MERCHANDISE HIS CHARACTERS.

NOW CALVIN IS PRAYING ON THE BACK OF EVERY OTHER SUV, DESPITE HIS CREATOR'S WISHES.

HOW IS THAT **NOT** THEFT?

SORRY, AM I INTERRUPTING?

RESCUING, PERHAPS.

ROWAN, THIS IS FATHER GUTIERRES. FATHER, THIS IS MY FRIEND, ROWAN BLACK.

A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.

PULL UP A **CHAIR**, ROWAN.

I WAS HOPING TO TALK TO YOU ALONE, ACTUALLY.

I'LL TAKE THAT AS MY CUE, THEN.

I'M SORRY, I DON'T MEAN TO DRIVE YOU OFF.

NONSENSE, I HAVE TO GET BACK TO THE CHURCH.

SAME TIME NEXT WEEK, ALEX?

ABSOLUTELY.

YOU MEET EVERY WEEK?

BARRING RELIGIOUS OBLIGATIONS.

HE'S A GOOD MAN.

DOES HE KNOW?

HE BELIEVES I'M WICCAN.

HE'S FASCINATED BY THE FACT THAT I'M PAGAN, I THINK.

PRIESTS MAKE ME **NERVOUS.**

BAD MEMORIES.

LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE THEM, TOO.

THAT WAS A **LONG** TIME AGO.

WHAT WERE YOU **THINKING** LAST NIGHT, RO?

YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO BRING YOUR **PHONE** INTO THE **CIRCLE,** ESPECIALLY ON **MABON,** ESP--

ALEX.

THAT CALL I GOT LAST NIGHT, IT WAS... THERE WAS THIS MAN, HE TOOK HOSTAGES DOWNTOWN--

THAT WAS **YOU?** I HEARD ABOUT IT ON THE RADIO--

HE TRIED TO **KILL** ME. HE WANTED TO **BURN** ME **ALIVE.**

I COULDN'T **STOP** HIM. THERE WAS A **SPELL** ON HIM, I COULDN'T...

...I TURNED HIS FLAMES ON HIM, ALEX...

...I KILLED HIM.

IT WASN'T SOME RANTING **LUNATIC?** YOU'RE CERTAIN HE'D BEEN **SPELLED?**

HE KNEW MY **TRUENAME,** ALEX.

HE **WHISPERED** IT IN MY **EAR.**

HE HAD A **LIGHTER.** TO MAKE HIS **FIRE.**

IT HAD THE **HAMMER** ON IT.

YOU JUST **SAID** HE'D BEEN SPELLED–

HE **WAS!** AND HE HAD THEIR **SYMBOL!**

YOU'RE **SURE?** YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY **POSITIVE?**

YOU THINK I CAN **FORGET** IT?

NO, OF COURSE NOT, I'M... I'M SORRY, THAT WAS...

...BUT MAGICK... ROWAN, IT GOES AGAINST **EVERYTHING** THEY BELIEVE.

THIS IS WHAT YOU **MEANT.** WHEN YOU SAID IT WAS **STARTING** AGAIN.

YES.

THEY **DON'T** USE MAGICK! THEY **NEVER** HAVE!

WELL, **SOMEBODY** DID.

TO CONTROL SOMEONE LIKE THAT, TO **MAKE** HIM TAKE **HOSTAGES**, EVERYTHING THEY SAID ON THE **NEWS**...

...THAT'S NOT **SMALL**, THAT'S NOT A **SIMPLE** SPELL.

I KNOW.

...NO...

...NOBODY IN THE **COVEN** IS THAT **POWERFUL**.

YOU ARE.

SO ARE **YOU**. IF YOU'D **LET** YOURSELF BE.

I'M **NOT** ACCUSING YOU, ALEX.

YOU IDIOT, I KNOW **THAT**.

DING-DING

SO **WHO** DID IT?

THAT'S MY QUESTION...

MORGAN CHAFFEY
Today 1:33
Got a body. Where r u?

...I HAVE TO GO.

--HOW IT WENT WITH I.A.B.?

AS WELL AS CAN BE **EXPECTED**, I GUESS.

THEY MOSTLY WANTED TO **CONFIRM** MY STATEMENT, THAT'S ALL.

THEY WANTED TO KNOW IF YOU'D EVER MET HIM BEFORE?

PRETTY MUCH.

P.P.D.

FAIR QUESTION. THE GUY WAS **ASKING** FOR YOU BY **NAME**, AFTER ALL.

YOU THINK I'M HOLDING SOMETHING **BACK**, PARTNER?

FROM I.A.B.? **MAYBE.** FROM ME?

NEVER.

SEAN! WHAT YOU GOT FOR US?

DETECTIVE CHAFFEY, DETECTIVE BLACK, SO **PLEASED** YOU COULD **JOIN** ME...

...**BODY** WASHED UP AGAINST THE **PIER** ABOUT AN HOUR AGO.

IMPOSSIBLE TO BE SURE. THE HERALD'S A **COLD** RIVER, DETECTIVE BLACK, BUT AT A **GUESS**...

ANY IDEA HOW LONG HE'D BEEN IN THE **WATER**, SEAN?

...I'D SAY IT'S BEEN AT **LEAST** TWO WEEKS SINCE HE WENT INTO THE DRINK.

SKIN'S ALREADY PAST MACERATION AND THE BLOATING WAS ADVANCED ENOUGH TO BRING HIM TO THE SURFACE.

THE CURRENT DID A NUMBER ON HIM, TOO. I'D GUESS THE BODY ENTERED THE WATER NEAR THE CONFLUENCE, THEN GOT SWEPT UP HERE.

THERE'S EVIDENCE OF POST-MORTEM TRAUMA.

THE FISH GOT TO HIM.

CAUSE?

SUGGESTIVE OF **HOMICIDE.** I WON'T KNOW MORE UNTIL I HAVE HIM NAKED AND ON THE SLAB.

STILL HAS HIS WALLET...

...YOU DO THE HONORS, MY DEAR.

COULD BE SUICIDE.

HE COULD'VE JUMPED FROM THE GATEWAY.

I DON'T THINK SO...

...NOT UNLESS HE MET A VERY PRECISE PROPELLER STRIKE.

YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THIS, SEAN?

YEAH, I'LL HAVE TO GET A BETTER LOOK BACK AT THE LAB.

BUT THAT'S WHAT I MEANT BY "SUGGESTIVE"...

...IF IT WAS A BOAT THAT DID THAT, IT'S A VERY CLEAN CUT.

RIGHT. OR MAYBE A MONSTER FISH.

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY.

YOU TRY THAT NEW SUSHI PLACE IN BUTCHER YET?

DON'T EAT FISH, THE MERCURY WILL KILL YOU. MEAT-AND-POTATOES MAN, ME.

CORONARY-BYPASS-MAN, YOU MEAN.

MORGAN.

IT'S BRUCE DUNRIDGE.

DUNRIDGE, Bruce

YOU'RE SURE?

WON'T BE SURE UNTIL O'MALLEY'S DONE WITH THE **AUTOPSY**, BUT ACCORDING TO THE I.D. IN HIS WALLET, YEAH.

LOOKS LIKE BRUCE'S **SINS** FINALLY CAUGHT **UP** TO HIM.

YOU THINK IT WAS **REVENGE?** THE BELLE MURDER?

MAYBE, MAYBE ANOTHER CRIME ENTIRELY. DUNRIDGE'S **SHEET** READS LIKE A FELON'S **GREATEST HITS.**

OR **JUSTICE'S** GREATEST **FLOPS.** SON OF BITCH HAD A **KNACK** FOR STAYING OUT OF **JAIL.**

DETECTIVE BLACK? YOU WITH US?

SIR?

I ASKED IF YOU'RE **WITH** US.

YES, SIR.

AND HE WAS **MUTILATED?**

WELL, SOME OF IT WAS FROM THE **RIVER,** THE **CURRENT.** BUT HE'S MISSING A **HAND--**

SINISTER.

HIS SINISTER HAND.

A MURDERER'S SINISTER HAND.

LIKE I SAID, WE'LL KNOW MORE WHEN O'MALLEY'S DONE WITH THE AUTOPSY.

SHOULD HAVE IT TOMORROW.

Uh-huh.

TALK TO THE BELLES. AT THE LEAST, THEY'LL WANT TO KNOW THE BASTARD WHO MURDERED THEIR DAUGHTER IS DEAD.

AT BEST, ONE OF THEM DID IT.

THAT'S OUR PLAN, SIR.

YOU ALL RIGHT, PARD?

IT WAS HIS LEFT HAND, MORGAN.

WANTED

YOU KEEP SAYING THAT. IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE SIGNIFICANT?

PROBABLY NOT.

HEY, RO?

MIKE?

YOUR NAME, YOUR FULL NAME, IT'S ROWAN BLACK, RIGHT?

IT IS.

LET IT GO, MIKE. IT'S COINCIDENCE, THAT'S ALL.

IT'S AN AWESOME COINCIDENCE!

GOTTA BE WHY HE WAS ASKING FOR HER LAST NIGHT!

THE HELL ARE YOU GUYS ON ABOUT?

THE JOHN DOE FROM LAST NIGHT, HE WAS IN THE MISSING PERSONS DATABASE. WENT MISSING A MONTH AGO.

WE I.D.'ED HIM OFF THE DENTAL RECORDS.

GET THIS. HIS NAME?

ROWAN WHITE.

WHAT A COINCIDENCE, *huh?*

HOMICIDE REPORT

NB 105

E DEPARTMENT

CITY OF PORTSMOU

S PERSON KILLED | FIRST NAME | MIDDLE NAME | RACE | SEX | AGE | RESIDENCE OF PERSON KILLED | OFFENSE SERIAL NO.

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FENSE (GIVE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OCCURENCE OF OFFENSE AND ITS INVESTIGATION) | USE BOTH SIDES OF THIS SHEET

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ECTED OR POSSIBLE MOTIVES

DESCRIPTION OF SUSPECTS OR PERSONS WANTED

WN | ALIAS | ADDRESS | SEX | RACE | AGE | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | COMPLEXION

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Issue 003 “A” Cover by **NICOLA SCOTT**

--TWO I.P.A.S, A GUINNESS, AND A NEAT BOURBON...

--HANDS OFF, GET YOUR OWN DAMN WINGS--

--SWEAR TO GOD IF THEY DON'T START CONNECTING--

...A LIGHT? ANYONE GOT A LIGHT?

COPPER SHIELD

THANKS, GUYS.

WHAT DO WE OWE?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, NICK.

--ah, THEY'RE KILLING ME! THEY'RE KILLING ME, HERE!

THEIR POSSESSION IS SHIT, MIKE!

AND THAT MAKES THIS SEASON DIFFERENT EXACTLY HOW?

MORGAN, DID I HEAR RIGHT...

...THAT FLOATER YOU GUYS PULLED OUT OF THE HERALD?

THAT WAS BRUCE DUNRIDGE?

BLOATED, BATTERED, AND MUTILATED.

SAY WHAT NOW?
HIS LEFT HAND WAS MISSING.
POST-MORTEM?
O'MALLEY COULDN'T BE SURE--
FUCK YES!!!
FINALLY! BEAUTIFUL!
DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO MAKE THEM HAPPY.
WELL, THE WIZARDS SCORE SO RARELY, RO.
WAIT, SO IS IT A HOMICIDE?
STILL WAITING FOR O'MALLEY TO RULE ON IT.
WE SHOULD KNOW BY TOMORROW.
BE A FITTING END TO THAT PIECE OF SHIT IF IT WAS.
MAN WAS A STAIN ON HUMANITY.

MURDER'S MURDER.

I GOTTA GO HOME.

I GOTTA FEED MY CAT.

SEE YOU IN THE MORNING.

SEE YOU, RO.

TOMORROW.

EXIT

HEY. HEY!

ROWAN, WAIT A SECOND!

YOU OKAY?

I HAD **ONE** DRINK, MORGAN. I'M GOOD TO RIDE.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN.

BEEN A BUMPY TWENTY-FOUR HOURS FOR YOU, THAT'S ALL.

GUY SETS HIMSELF ON **FIRE** IN FRONT OF YOU--NEVER MIND IT TURNS OUT YOU HAVE PRACTICALLY THE **SAME** NAME--

--THEN I.A.B. THIS MORNING, **THEN** DUNRIDGE WASHES UP...

...WOULDN'T BE MUCH OF A **PARTNER** IF I WASN'T WORRIED ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW?

I'M OKAY.

REALLY.

TELL ANNA I SAID HI.

THOSE THINGS WILL KILL YOU.

SAYS THE WOMAN RIDING THE MOTORCYCLE.

YOU GOING TO INVITE ME IN?

THAT'S VAMPIRES, ALEX...

...BESIDES, THE HOUSE KNOWS YOU.

YOU MIGHT'VE SET **WARDS.**

NOT YET.

THAT DIDN'T **SOUND** LIKE A JOKE.

RO?

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

I'M BEING **TARGETED.**

SOMEONE...

...SOMEONE IS **COMING** FOR ME.

I CAN **FEEL** IT, ALEX.

...TOLD YOU HE WAS SPELLED, I WAS SURE OF IT--

AND I TOLD YOU THAT MAKES NO SENSE...

...THE HAMMER DOESN'T USE MAGICK, RO! THEY NEVER HAVE!

THEN EXPLAIN THE SYMBOL ON THE LIGHTER, ALEX!

I WAS PULLED IN FRONT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS THIS MORNING, THEY HAD IT IN EVIDENCE, I SAW IT AGAIN, UP CLOSE!

IT'S THE SYMBOL OF THE AIRA!

THEY DON'T--

THE VICTIM'S NAME, THE MAN I KILLED?

ROWAN WHITE.

FUCK.

FUUUCK.

OKAY. OKAY, YES, BUT WE KNOW HE'D BEEN SPELLED, YOU SAID SO YOURSELF.

AND IT MAKES SENSE THAT WHOEVER DID THE CAST ALSO DID THEIR HOMEWORK, ROWAN.

SO WHEN I HAD TO CUT OUT OF COFFEE, THAT WAS MORGAN.

A BODY WASHED UP ON THE HERALD, NORTH OF THE CONFLUENCE...

...IT WAS IN **BAD** SHAPE, HAD BEEN IN THE WATER AT LEAST TWO WEEKS, MAYBE LONGER.

WE MADE A PRELIMINARY I.D. OFF HIS WALLET. BRUCE **DUNRIDGE.**

THIS WAS A **BAD** GUY, ALEX. BUT WE NEVER GOT ANYTHING TO STICK.

LAST TIME HE WALKED WAS THE RAPE AND MURDER OF A YOUNG WOMAN NAMED SARAH BELLE.

THEN HE FINALLY GOT WHAT HE **DESERVED.** THREE **TIMES** SHALL IT--

HE WAS MISSING HIS **LEFT HAND,** ALEX.

NO ONE IN THE **COVEN** KNOWS HOW TO **MAKE** A HAND OF GLORY, LET ALONE **USE** ONE.

EVEN IF AIRA **HAS** STARTED USING MAGICK, I CAN'T IMAGINE THEY WOULD GO THAT **DEEP.**

SOMEONE **IS.**

CAN YOU GET ME THE **LIGHTER?** THE ONE ROWAN WHITE USED?

THAT'S **NOT** A GOOD IDEA.

SOMEONE **IS** COMING FOR YOU, RO. YOU'RE **RIGHT.**

GET ME THE **LIGHTER** AND I CAN TELL YOU **WHO.**

IT'S **STEALING** EVIDENCE, ALEX.

I UNDERSTAND THAT.

I ALSO UNDERSTAND WE'RE TALKING ABOUT YOUR **JOB** OR YOUR **LIFE.**

I KNOW YOU'RE OUT OF **PRACTICE,** BUT DAMN-WELL SET YOUR **WARDS** AS SOON AS I'M GONE...

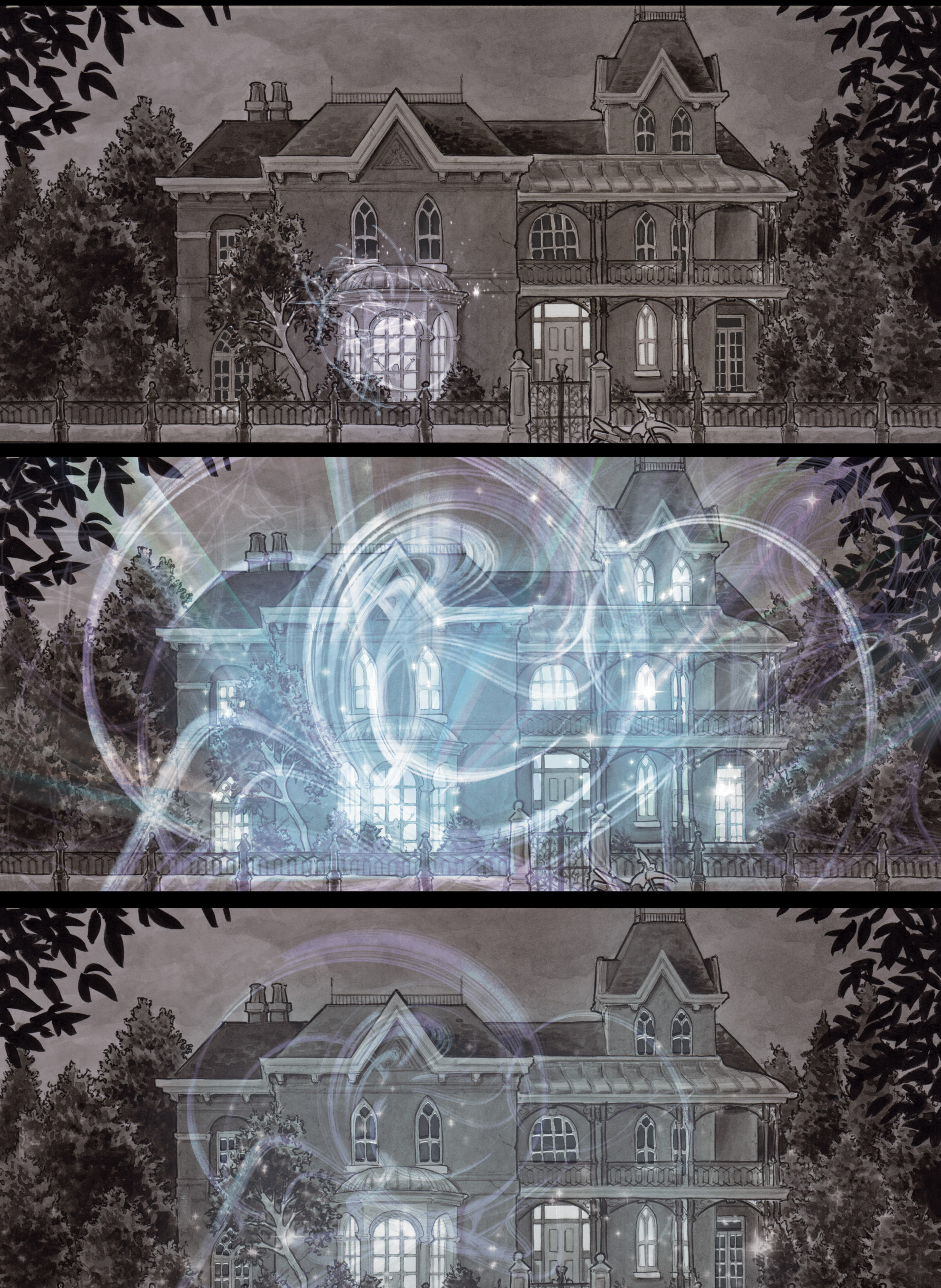
...AND DON'T YOU **DARE** SLEEP UNTIL YOU **DO....**

click

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT...

...I'M GOING TO FEED YOU NOW.

ILLIE



NO, I'M LOOKING FOR ONE IN SILVER...

Puff of Smoke

...BUT PLAIN, NO ENGRAVING OR MARKINGS ON IT.

THINK I GOT SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

...THIS THE KIND OF THING YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

CLOSE ENOUGH.

Berkano
Berkano
Berkano

THANK YOU, MY LADY.

GOD DAMMIT, MIKE...

...WHY YOU GO AND COVER MY **DESK** LIKE THAT?

WHERE THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO PUT THIS STUFF?

USE THE BREAK ROOM.

TAKE A BREATH, NICKY, FOR PETE'S SAKE.

DID YOU AT **LEAST** GET THAT BOOK OF SYMBOLS OUT OF **REFERENCE?**

NO, I DID **NOT**...

...THERE'S THIS THING CALLED THE **INTERNET**, YOU SHOULD **TRY** IT...

COFFEE?

Mhm? NAH, I'M GOOD.

...MAYBE STOP BUSTING MY **BALLS** ALL THE DAMN TIME....

THAT THE **WHITE** INVESTIGATION?

YEAH, JUST WANTED TO SEE IF WE COULDN'T GET ANYTHING MORE ON THIS GUY FROM HIS **BELONGINGS.**

JUST SOME IDEA WHO HE **WAS,** YOU KNOW?

HAVING A **BITCH** OF A TIME FINDING ANYONE WHO ACTUALLY **KNEW** HIM.

YOU'RE INTO WEIRD SHIT, RIGHT, BLACK?

WEIRD SHIT **HOW,** EXACTLY?

MYSTICAL STUFF, CRYSTALS, INCENSE, TEA, LIKE THAT.

THE **SYMBOL** ON WHITE'S **LIGHTER,** IT'S GOT TO **MEAN** SOMETHING...

...BUT I CAN'T FIND ANYTHING THAT REALLY **MATCHES** IT.

I DUNNO...

...IT'S PROBABLY **NOTHING--**

SHIT...

...SORRY, I'LL GET THAT.

YEAH, IF YOU **WOULD**, PLEASE...

...I ALREADY HAVE TO PICK UP AFTER MY **OWN** PARTNER.

RATHER **NOT** HAVE TO DO IT FOR **YOU**, TOO.

PERRINI'S STILL ON YOUR NECK?

HE MISSES CIMINO.

I DON'T **BLAME** HIM, THEY RODE TOGETHER FOR WHAT, TEN YEARS?

IMAGINE IT'D BE THE SAME IF YOU AND MORGAN EVER **SPLIT.**

MAYBE.

SHIT. **NOT** MAYBE.

HERE'S HOPING I WON'T EVER HAVE TO FIND OUT, YOU KNOW?

F BA-800-HI

DAS GING JA SCHNELL, BRUDER...

...DU WURDEST ERST GEGEN **ABEND** ERWARTET.

ICH KOMME AUS LONDON.

Ah. WIR DACHTEN DU BIST IN FRANKFURT.

GIBTS EIN TRIBUNAL?

NEIN. ICH WAR SCHON VOR ORT ALS MAN DICH RIEF. ANSCHEINEND IRGENDEINE UNTERSUCHUNG.

ICH BIN DABEI DIE **ARCHIEVE** NEU ZU ORDNEN, UND ETWAS IN DIE **AKTEN** HÄNGENGEBLIEBEN...

...UND DABEI AUF EINEN **FASZINIERENDEN** BERICHT AUS ALEXANDRIEN GESTOSSEN.

VON KNAPP 50 JAHREN VOR DER ALLGEMEINEN ZEITRECHNUNG--

VOR **CHRISTUS.**

WENN DIR DAS LIEBER IST.

ICH PERSÖNLICH FINDE, DASS DER BLINDE GLAUBE SEINE GANZ **EIGENEN** VORURTEILE MIT SICH BRINGT.

UND DIE VORURTEILE ANDERER LASSEN SICH JA IMMER BESONDERS GUT **AUSBEUTEN.**

STEPAN. DANKE, DASS DU HIER BIST.

ICH GLAUBE, WIR SIND DA AUF WAS **GESTOSSEN.**

ENGLISH, PLEASE, LAURENT?

ELSE **YOUR** GERMAN AND **MY** FRENCH WILL MAKE THIS **DIFFICULT.**

YES, OF COURSE.

I WAS SAYING, I THINK WE MAY HAVE SOMETHING.

CERTAINLY WORTH **INVESTIGATING** AT THE **LEAST.**

TELL ME.

A CITY IN THE UNITED STATES, PORTSMOUTH.

WE'VE DOCUMENTED SOME **MINOR** ACTIVITY THERE OVER THE YEARS, BUT NOTHING PROHIBITIVE...

Portsmouth HERALD

Murdered and Mutilated

...BUT NOW, YOU SEE, IT'S COME UP **TWICE** IN AS MANY DAYS IN OUR SEARCHES.

THIS MAN, A CRIMINAL, RECOVERED FROM THE WATER WITHOUT HIS LEFT HAND...

Hostage Stand-Off Ends in Suicide.

...AND THE DAY BEFORE, THEN, **THIS.**

HE BURNED HIMSELF **ALIVE.**

I WILL GO AT ONCE.

IT MAY BE **NOTHING**, YOU UNDERSTAND.

VERIFY **FIRST**. NO ACTION UNTIL WE **KNOW**.

AS YOU SAY, LAURENT. IT MAY BE **NOTHING**, YES?

STEPAN.

VISIT THE **ARMORY** BEFORE YOU GO.

JUST IN CASE.

HOMICIDE REPORT

NB 105

E DEPARTMENT

CITY OF PORTSMOU

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Issue 004 “A” Cover by **NICOLA SCOTT**

...COMPLETED MISTER DUNRIDGE'S **AUTOPSY**, AND LET ME TELL YOU, OUR FRIEND BRUCIE HERE DID **NOT** GO EASILY.

SEAN, IF YOU'RE ABOUT TO TELL US WE HAVE TO INVESTIGATE THE **MURDER** OF THIS PIECE OF SHIT, I AM TAKING YOU **OFF** MY CHRISTMAS LIST.

YOU WERE HOPING MISTER DUNRIDGE HERE SUFFERED **TERMINAL REMORSE?**

FAT FUCKING **CHANCE**, DETECTIVE CHAFFEY.

SEAN?

IS THAT A **LIGATURE** MARK AROUND HIS NECK?

VERY GOOD, DETECTIVE BLACK.

MISSED IT AT FIRST BECAUSE OF THE **BLOATING**, BUT INDEED...

...SOMEONE HUNG OUR FRIEND HERE BY HIS **NECK** UNTIL HE WAS **DEAD.**

WHOEVER **DID** IT FUCKED IT UP, TOO.

FUCKED IT UP **HOW?** HE'S **DEAD.**

FAILED TO SNAP HIS **NECK** ON THE **DROP.**

BRUCIE HERE **ASPHYXIATED.** COULD'VE TAKEN ALMOST AN **HOUR** BEFORE HE **DIED.**

CAN YOU CONFIRM THE HAND WAS REMOVED **POST**-MORTEM?

IT WASN'T A **PROPELLER** THAT DID THAT. **VERY** CLEAN CUT. DEFINITELY AFTER HE'D DIED.

NO SIGN ON HIS **OTHER** WRIST THAT HIS **HANDS** HAD BEEN BOUND, BY THE WAY.

SO HE EITHER PUT THE **NOOSE** ON **WILLINGLY** OR HE WAS **COMPELLED** TO DO SO.

THAT TRACK FOR YOU? SOMEONE **FORCED** BRUCE DUNRIDGE TO HANG HIMSELF?

NOTHING ABOUT THIS TRACKS.

TOX SCREEN? STOMACH CONTENTS?

THERE WASN'T MUCH TO GO ON, DETECTIVE.

TWO-PLUS WEEKS IN THE **RIVER** STRIPPED HIM PRETTY DAMN **CLEAN.**

THAT SAID, WE DID FIND **THESE** IN HIS STOMACH...

...THINK THEY'RE **STONES** OF SOME KIND...

...BUT I'LL SEND 'EM TO THE **STATE** LAB FOR ANALYSIS, ANYWAY.

HOW LONG WILL THAT TAKE?

WAY THEY'RE BACKED UP? FUCK KNOWS...

...IT'S **PROBABLY** NOTHING, THEY'LL TURN OUT TO BE APPLE PIPS OR SOMETHING.

OLD POPCORN KERNELS OR--

CLING

EVERYTHING OKAY, PARTNER?

FINE.

SLIPPED.

I'LL MEET YOU OUTSIDE.

HEY.

YOU'RE BEING AWFULLY QUIET, PARTNER.

TELL ME YOU **SEE** IT, RO.

YOU'VE **GOT** TO SEE IT.

SEE **WHAT?**

BRUCE DUNRIDGE, ABOUT AS **BAD** AS THEY **MAKE** THEM.

BODY IN THE **WATER** LONG ENOUGH TO STRIP ANY **TRACE** EVIDENCE.

DEATH BY HANGING. AN **EXECUTION.**

AND HE WAS **COMPELLED,** RO.

LIKE MAYBE AT **GUNPOINT.**

NO, MORGAN. NO.

IT FITS, YOU KNOW IT DOES.

THEN WHY TAKE HIS LEFT HAND?

I DON'T KNOW. RANDOM ELEMENT, MAYBE? TO THROW US OFF?

LEAVE THAT PART OUT FOR A SECOND, YOU KNOW WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE...

...IT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF US TOOK THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.

WE STILL NEED TO TALK TO THE BELLES.

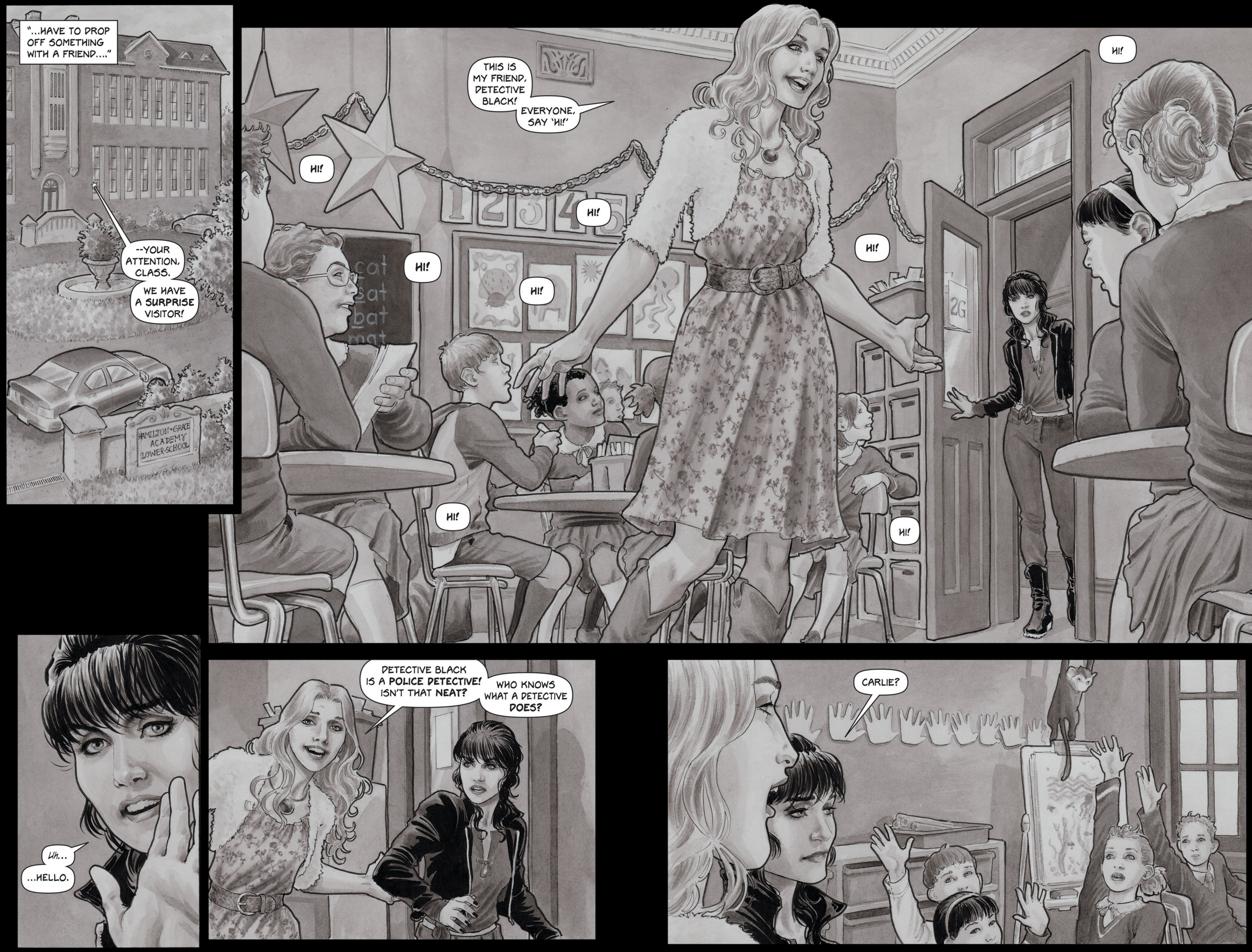
YEAH, I KNOW.

LET'S JUST HOPE THEY CAN GIVE US SOMETHING.

YOU'VE GOT AN ADDRESS FOR THEM?

DOWN IN DUSKFIRE.

NEED TO MAKE A STOP UP IN SWIFTSLOPE ON THE WAY, THOUGH...


"...HAVE TO DROP OFF SOMETHING WITH A FRIEND...."
--YOUR ATTENTION, CLASS.
WE HAVE A SURPRISE VISITOR!
HAMILTON-GRACE ACADEMY LOWER-SCHOOL
THIS IS MY FRIEND, DETECTIVE BLACK!
EVERYONE, SAY 'HI!'
HI!
HI!
HI!
HI!
HI!
HI!
HI!
HI!
Uh...
...HELLO.
DETECTIVE BLACK IS A POLICE DETECTIVE! ISN'T THAT NEAT?
WHO KNOWS WHAT A DETECTIVE DOES?
CARLIE?

THEY FIND BAD PEOPLE AND STOP THEM BEING BAD--

--LIKE MITCHELL BECAUSE HE STOLE MY COOKIE!

NO I DIDN'T I DIDN'T STEAL IT--

YOU DID! YOU DID AND NOW THE DETECTIVE-LADY IS GONNA TAKE YOU TO JAIL!

CARLIE, IS THAT HOW WE TALK TO EACH OTHER?

IS THAT HOW WE SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS? WITH HARD WORDS? OR DO WE USE KIND WORDS WHEN--

ACTUALLY...

...I'M HERE BECAUSE I HAVE TO TALK TO MS. GREY.

PORTSMOUTH POLICE BUREAU HAS A COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE, YOU KNOW.

2G

THEY ARRANGE SCHOOL VISITS AND EVERYTHING. I COULD PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR YOU.

BITCH.

BITCHER.

BITCHEST.

YOU HAVE IT?

I NEED TO RETURN IT BY TOMORROW.

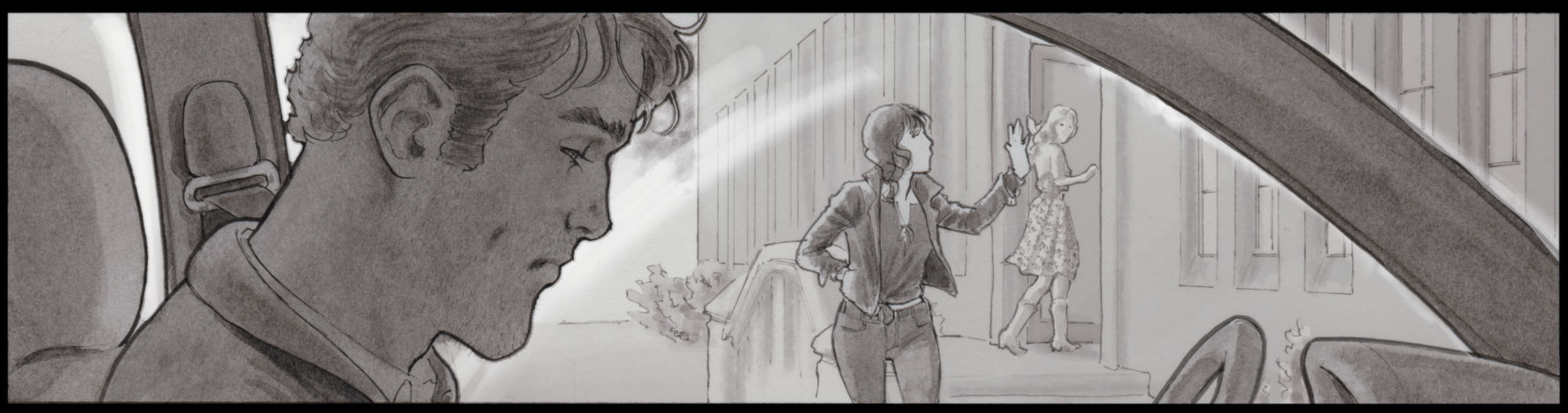
I HAD TO GLAMOUR A REPLACEMENT...

...BUT IT WON'T HOLD, AND IT'S PART OF AN ACTIVE INVESTIGATION, ALEX.

THAT MEANS THAT PEOPLE ARE LOOKING AT IT, AND THE MORE ATTENTION THEY PAY--

--THE SOONER THE SPELL WILL BREAK, YES.

I'LL DO IT TONIGHT. CAN YOU COME BY?



EVERYTHING COOL?

FINE.

WHAT?

I DUNNO.

GUESS I'M **WORRIED** ABOUT YOU.

I'M FINE.

SURE.

YOU ONLY HAD A GUY **SELF-IMMOLATE** IN FRONT OF YOU, THAT'S ALL.

BUT YOU'RE FINE.

SAME WAY I WAS FINE AFTER THAT **I.E.D.** BLEW HALF MY **SQUAD** ALL TO HELL.

I WAS FUCKING **PEACHY...**

...RIGHT UNTIL I **WASN'T.**

GOOD MORNING.

AFTERNOON, NOW, ACTUALLY...

...MAY I ASK THE PURPOSE OF YOUR VISIT, MISTER HAHN?

REISEPASS

PART BUSINESS, PART VACATION.

I HAVE A CONFERENCE. THEN I WOULD LIKE TO GO HIKING.

NICE TIME OF **YEAR** FOR IT. THE LEAVES ARE JUST TURNING UP IN THE **MONARCHS.**

I AM TOLD IT IS **QUITE** LOVELY.

YES, IT **IS**...

...ENJOY YOUR **STAY** IN PORTSMOUTH, SIR.

EXETER HOTEL

oogle
Occult Books
Blessed Light

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION, DETECTIVE CHAFFEY.

I'M ASKING IF YOU OR YOUR WIFE HAVE HAD ANY INTERACTION WITH BRUCE DUNRIDGE IN THE LAST MONTH OR SO, MISTER BELLE.

HAVE WE HAD ANY INTERACTIONS WITH THE MAN WHO **RAPED** AND **MURDERED** OUR DAUGHTER.

I SEE.

LIKE **WHAT?** LIKE HAVING HIM OVER FOR **COFFEE?**

THROWING HIM A FUCKING **PARTY** SINCE YOU BASTARDS COULDN'T PUT HIM **AWAY?**

IS **THAT** WHAT YOU MEAN?

FRANK.

NO, DONNA!

HE KILLED SARAH! HE--HE **USED** HER AND **KILLED** HER AND THEY COME BACK **ASKING**--

--WHY? WHY ARE YOU EVEN **ASKING** US THIS?

BRUCE DUNRIDGE IS **DEAD.**

I HOPE HE **SUFFERED** FIRST.

HE DID.

WADDYA GOT?

O'MALLEY CONFIRMS DUNRIDGE WAS **MURDERED.**

HE WAS **HUNG**--ASPHYXIATED, TECHNICALLY--BEFORE HIS BODY WENT INTO THE WATER.

HAND WAS REMOVED **AFTER** THE FACT, BUT BEFORE HE WAS **DUNKED.**

THING THE TWO, WE TALKED TO THE BELLES AND THEY **DIDN'T** DO IT.

YOU'RE **SURE?**

ON A **GUT** LEVEL, I'M ABSOLUTELY **POSITIVE.**

MORE CONCRETE, DUNRIDGE WAS **COMPELLED** INTO THE NOOSE.

THAT TAKES **TIME,** AND IT TAKES **RESTRAINT,** AND FRANK BELLE DOESN'T HAVE **EITHER** OF THOSE THINGS IN HIM.

WHAT ABOUT HIS WIFE?

IT'S **POSSIBLE** DONNA COULD'VE FORCED DUNRIDGE INTO THE NOOSE AT **GUNPOINT,** SAY, BUT...

...I DON'T **SEE** IT, CAP.

I **CERTAINLY** DON'T SEE HER CUTTING OFF HIS **HAND** AFTER THE FACT.

YOUR PARTNER AGREE?

YEAH, THERE'S **NO** DAYLIGHT BETWEEN US ON **THIS.**

WE CAN KEEP CHASING THEM **DOWN** IF YOU LIKE, BUT I DON'T SEE US FINDING **ANY** JOY.

NO, I DON'T SEE IT, **EITHER.**

LAST-KNOWNS NEXT?

WE'LL START ON THEM TOMORROW.

KEEP ME POSTED. HAVE A GOOD NIGHT, RO.

YOU, TOO, CAPTAIN.

HEY, RO?

ANNA WANTS TO KNOW IF YOU'LL JOIN US FOR DINNER TONIGHT.

SHE'S FRYING **CHICKEN.**

I'D LOVE TO.

AND TO THEE, MY LADY ÁIRMID, I GIVE THANKS FOR THIS GIFT.

AND TO THEE, MY LADY JUTURNA, I GIVE THANKS FOR THIS TOO.

Lady, oracle, open my eyes...

...grant me sight that I may see...

...grant me sight that I may see...

...grant me sight that I may see...

...in truth, in wisdom, in clarity...

...they who work their will...

...against my sister, my mother, my daughter...

...against my bride, my lover, my husband...

...by my will...

...grant me sight...

...so mote it be.

hkk

Hello, witch.

Good-bye, witch.

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P.M.

D DEAD BY PHYSICIAN | PERSON WITH WHOM ACCUSED LIVED OR ASSOCIATED

FENSE (GIVE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OCCURENCE OF OFFENSE AND ITS INVESTIGATION) | USE BOTH SIDES OF THIS SHEET

N INTO CUSTODY | ADDRESS | WITNESS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY | ADDRESS

ECTED OR POSSIBLE MOTIVES

DESCRIPTION OF SUSPECTS OR PERSONS WANTED

WN | ALIAS | ADDRESS | SEX | RACE | AGE | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | COMPLEXION

TIVITY | OCCUPATION | DRESS AND OTHER MARKS | CAUSE FOR SUSPICION

WN | ALIAS | ADDRESS | SEX | RACE | AGE | HEIGHT | WEIGHT | EYES | HAIR | COMPLEXION

TIVITY | OCCUPATION | DRESS AND OTHER MARKS | CAUSE FOR SUSPICION

Issue 005 “A” Cover by **NICOLA SCOTT**

...DUNRIDGE'S HAUNTS IN WHITTIER TOMORROW–

Nuh-uh, NO, MORGAN...

...YOU KNOW THE RULES. NO SHOP TALK AT THE DINNER TABLE.

ROWAN'S MY PARTNER, ANNA.

YOU CAN'T EXPECT US NOT TO TALK ABOUT WORK.

SHE'S ALSO OUR GUEST, AND MY FRIEND, TOO.

...I'D NEVER HEAR THE END OF IT.

GO AND DO THE DISHES, HUSBAND-MAN.

LET ME HELP.

Oh, NO. YOU'RE OUR GUEST...

THEY'RE SO HARD TO TRAIN.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED OBEDIENCE SCHOOL?

I CAN STILL HEAR YOU GUYS, YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?

Oh, YES. WE KNOW.

I SWEAR TO GOD IN ANOTHER MONTH I'M GOING TO NEED A CRANE TO STAND UP.

HERE.

I THINK I AM READY TO HAVE THIS BABY OUTSIDE OF ME, ROWAN.

YOU'RE SO READY TO TRADE PREGNANT GLOW FOR SLEEPLESS AND HARRIED, ARE YOU?

IF IT GETS MY ASS BACK TO ITS NORMAL SIZE, HELL YES.

AAAND NOW WITH THE KICKING.

HE'S GONNA BE A GOAL-SCORER.

SHE!

GONNA BE A GIRL.

IT'S A BOY.

WOMEN KNOW THESE THINGS.

SOME DO, YES.

C'MON, I'LL SHOW YOU THE NURSERY.

PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON IT THIS LAST WEEKEND.

FINISHED WITH TIME TO SPARE.

UNLESS HE COMES EARLY.

STILL HAVE SIX WEEKS OR SO.

TAKE A LOOK.

Oh, ANNA.

YOU CAN JUST... FEEL IT IN THE ROOM.

THIS CHILD IS GOING TO BE SO LOVED.

THAT IS THE PLAN.

YOU REALLY FEEL THAT?

DON'T YOU?

HONESTLY, WHAT I MOSTLY FEEL IS A PERPETUAL NEED TO PEE.

THAT AND WORRY. FEAR, REALLY.

OF?

I DON'T KNOW. **EVERY**THING.

THERE'S A WHOLE **INDUSTRY** OUT THERE DEDICATED TO **SCARING** PREGNANT WOMEN.

THAT I'LL DO IT **WRONG.** THAT I'LL BE A **BAD** MOTHER.

THAT SOMETHING WILL **HAPPEN** TO THE BABY.

THAT SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN TO **MORGAN.**

NOTHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO MORGAN,

I TELL MYSELF THAT, BUT--

NO, ANNA, LISTEN, **NOTHING** WILL HAPPEN TO MORGAN.

I WON'T **LET** IT. I WON'T **PERMIT** IT.

YOU HAVE MY **VOW.**

I NEED TO GO. I HAVE TO STOP BY A FRIEND'S BEFORE I CALL IT A NIGHT.

RO?

THANKS.

OF COURSE.

Noodle House
15
13
Sacred Shadows & Blessed Light

acred
hadows

MADAM ESTA
Fortune Teller
Tarot
Astrology
Palmistry

ALL STAR
Events

PORTSMOUTH DIVINING

F 20 Something
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SEEKING ORSHA PRACTITIONERS
For Breede College research project
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THE WICCAN REDE

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Magic

ENCORE PERFORMANCE

CROSS CROWLEY

CAN I HELP YOU WITH SOMETHING?

I HOPE SO, YES.

I AM RECENTLY MOVED TO PORTSMOUTH, YES? BUT AT HOME, I PRACTICED SOMETIMES WITH A **GROUP.**

I WAS HOPING TO SEE PERHAPS IF THERE WAS ONE I COULD VISIT?

WELL, I GUESS IT DEPENDS WHAT YOU'RE **AFTER.**

YOU LOOKING FOR SOMETHING GARDNERIAN? MEN'S GROUPS? OLDER PAGAN TRADITIONS?

OLDER, YES. NORSE. I SUPPOSE THAT IS OBVIOUS.

WE'VE GOT A **READING** GROUP THAT MEETS FRIDAYS AT SEVEN. LOTS OF DIFFERENT **TRADITIONS** AT THAT ONE.

FEEL FREE TO DROP BY, YOU CAN **MEET** SOME PEOPLE, SEE IF YOU FIND A MATCH.

I WILL DO THAT, THANK YOU.

THANK YOU **VERY** MUCH.

--TOMORROW NIGHT--

...WHICH WILL GIVE ME OPPORTUNITY TO **BETTER** LEARN THE **COMMUNITY.**

THERE ARE **TRUE** PAGANS HERE. THERE ARE **SIGNS.**

STEPAN, YOU'RE SEEKING SUSPECTS **BEFORE** WE HAVE EVIDENCE OF A **CRIME.**

MERCI BEAUCOUP, ANNE-MARIE.

PAS DE QUOI.

THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE **AIR** HERE, LAURENT.

LIKE IN SABON LAYI, WHERE THE **CHILDREN** WERE **BURNED.**

SABON LAYI WAS HUMAN **IGNORANCE,** NOT **MAGICK.**

IT WAS **EVIL.**

AND EVIL IS AS **REAL** AS **MAGICK.**

WE WILL HAVE THIS DEBATE-- YET AGAIN-- **ANOTHER** TIME, STEPAN.

ANNE-MARIE WAS ABLE TO ACCESS THE AUTOPSY FOR THE MAN, DUNRIDGE.

IT IS **SUGGESTIVE.** THE MAN WAS AN ACCUSED MURDERER.

HUNG BY THE **NECK** AND FOUND WITHOUT HIS **LEFT HAND.**

IF THAT IS NOT ENOUGH, THERE **MAY** HAVE BEEN **DEVIL'S SEEDS** IN HIS STOMACH.

THREE OF THEM.

*DID THEY FIND SEEDS IN THE OTHER VICTIM? THE ONE WHO **BURNED**, THE JOHN DOE--*

NOTHING IN HIS AUTOPSY, BUT IT COULD HAVE BEEN **MISSED.**

YOU'LL HAVE TO LOOK YOURSELF, AND UNFORTUNATELY I SEE NO **LEGAL** WAY FOR YOU TO DO SO...

...WHICH MEANS YOU'LL NEED TO FIND THE BODY AND EXAMINE IT YOURSELF.

Witch witch witch--

--bitch bitch bitch--

--itch itch itch--

hkk kkhh

--scritch scritch scr--

--GUH--

--oh oh oh...

...Lady Grey is looking for a fight, what a delight...

...what a surprise...

...now you'll feast on your feces before next you rise!

AHH!!

INARA, HEAR ME--

--away!

Away!

AWAY!

Fucking bitch, little whore maker--

--try to send me away?

If you didn't want to invite me in--

--you shouldn't have opened the fucking door!

knock
knock
knock

SHIT.
YOU KNOW ME.
LET ME PASS.

GHNHH

ALEX?

--blood and bile devour your smile--

--back where you came from back--

ALEX?

--uHH--

I WAS GETTING WORRIED.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS, I THOUGHT I FELT SOMETHING....

ALEX?

ALEX!

Breach. Breach. BREACH.

PORTSMOUTH POLICE

0333

How much blood would a bloody witch bleed--

I'M HERE, SISTER, I'M WITH YOU, I'LL NOT LEAVE YOU--

--if the bloody bitch could bleed blood?

--SHIT!

SHIT SHIT SHIT SHIT--

--SHIT--

--Oh LADY, Oh MOTHER...

...Grey-Eyed Athena and War-Singer Agasaya...

...my queens of battle, blessed warrior women...

...for grace in battle, swift of attack...

...guide me to Greyside...

...my sister's side--

This is what happens when you peer into the dark places.

What happens when you sneak into the hidden spaces.

The only question left, the one you must consider...

...which of your entrails would you like first for dinner?

WAIT.

WAIT.

Wait? Whyfor would I wait?

SHE'S NOT TALKING TO YOU.

SHE'S TALKING TO ME.

Wait! Wa--

:gasp:

ALEX...

...Oh, ALEX...

...PLEASE... SAY SOMETHING....

:kaf kaff: Ah **FUCK.**

Oh SON OF A **BITCH** THAT FUCKING **SUCKED**...

...THAT'S THE **LAST** TIME I DO A FAVOR FOR **YOU**, ROWAN BLACK....

TAKE IT **EASY.**

FUCK EASY.

FUCK EASY, FUCK WHOEVER **DID** THAT...

THEY **KNEW** WE'D GO **LOOKING,** ROWAN.

THEY **KNEW** AND THEY WERE **READY.**

THEY'VE **NEVER** GONE THIS **FAR,** THEY'VE--

IT **WASN'T** *AIRA.*

IT WASN'T THEM. THIS WAS... **BEYOND** THAT.

THEN **WHO?**

I DON'T KNOW. I **DON'T.**

SIX THOUSAND YEARS, **NONE** OF ME REMEMBERS ENCOUNTERING SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

AND IF THEY'RE COMING AFTER YOU, ROWAN...

"...I DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN STOP THEM...."

WHAT DID I TELL YOU?

SHE'S READY.

NOW SHE JUST NEEDS TO BE PUSHED.

VARIANT COVER GALLERY

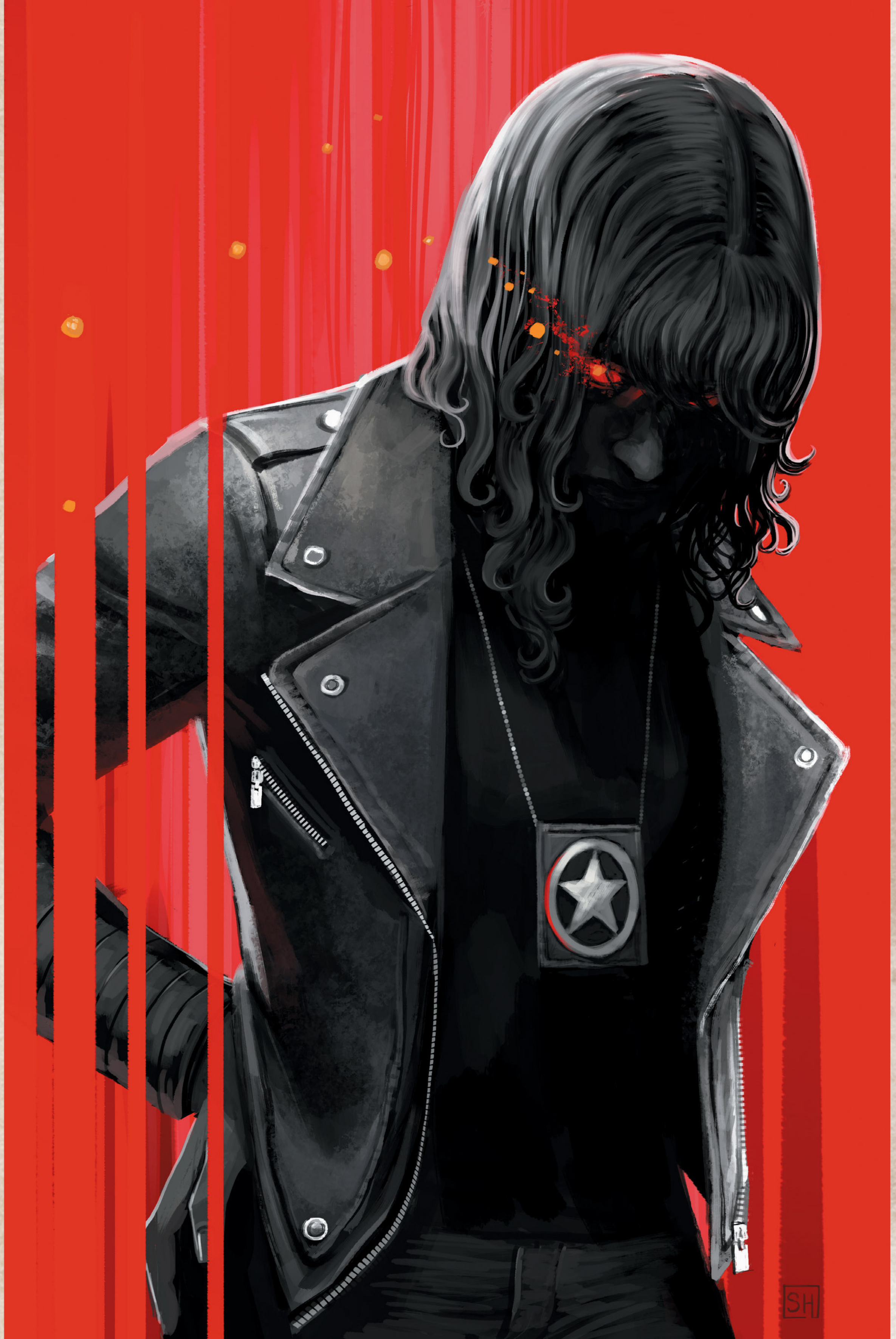
Issue 001 “B” Cover by
JILL THOMPSON

Issue 001 “Magazine” Cover by
RICK BURCHETT

Issue 002 “B” Cover by
TRISTAN JONES

Issue 003 “B” Cover by
AFUA RICHARDSON

Issue 004 “B” Cover by
MING DOYLE



Issue 005 “B” Cover by
STEPHANIE HANS

About the Creators

GREG RUCKA is a **New York Times** bestselling and Eisner Award-winning author of hundreds of comic books and two dozen novels. He is the co-creator of **Lazarus** with Michael Lark, published by Image Comics, as well as the comic **Stumptown**, with Justin Greenwood, from Oni Press. His next novel, **In The Eyes**, is due out in late 2016. He lives in Portland, Oregon, with his two children, and his wife, writer Jennifer Van Meter (**Hopeless Savages**, **Prima**). He believes in the magick of words.

NICOLA SCOTT is an Australian comic book artist working in the American industry since 2001. After working for Dark Horse, Image, and IDW, she quickly became a fan-favourite working exclusively for DC Entertainment on monthly titles **Birds Of Prey**, **Secret Six**, **Wonder Woman**, **Teen Titans**, **Superman,** and **New York Times** Bestseller **Earth 2**. She lives in Sydney with her husband, writer Andrew Constant, swears too much and will eat your bacon.

JODI WYNNE is an American letterer with a background in architecture and graphic design. She began work in comics as a character model, 3-D model maker, and cover colorist at Marvel with Michael Lark on titles such as **Daredevil**, **The Amazing Spiderman**, and **Dark Tower**. Current projects include **Lazarus** and **Slaves for Gods**. She lives in Texas with her husband, Aaron, and their two boys, Jackson and Sonny.

CHIARA ARENA is an illustrator and digital colourist. She lives in Sydney and she started her career in 2012 working as a digital colourist for Italian (Rizzoli Lizard and Panini comics), American (Scholastic), and French (Ankama) publications. She can be found online at **http://cargocollective.com/chiararena** and on Facebook at **https://m.facebook.com/chiara.arena3**

JEANINE SCHAEFER has been editing comics for over ten years. Titles include Marvel Comics' **X-Men**, **Wolverine**, and **She-Hulk**, DC Comics' **Robin**, **Citizen Jack**, and the upcoming **Prima** from Image Comics, and **Jonesy** at BOOM. She founded **Girl Comics**, an anthology celebrating the history of women at Marvel, and edited the Eisner-nominated Marvel YA **Mystic**. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband and adorable tornado/daughter, and sporadically runs a tumblr celebrating the special relationship between nerds and cats.

ERIC TRAUTMANN is a writer, graphic designer and occasional editor based in the Pacific Northwest. He is the book designer on **Black Magick** and **Lazarus**. He co-authored the DC/Vertigo original graphic novel **Shooters** (with Brandon Jerwa, illustrated by Steve Lieber), and has written for DC Comics and Dynamite Entertainment (including long runs on **Red Sonja**, **Vampirella,** and **Flash Gordon**). He can be found online at **www.erictrautmann.us** and at his wife's amazing comic store, **Olympic Cards & Comics** in Lacey, Wa.

SOMETHING WICCAN THIS WAY COMES.

Rowan Black knows:

the scent of a body burned at the stake.

the power of a murderer's severed left hand.

the danger of blood spilled on stone beneath the new moon.

Rowan Black is a witch.

Rowan Black knows:

that a badge is worth exactly as much as the person carrying it.

that motive is overrated.

that you always watch your partner's back.

Rowan Black is a cop.

She knows something else.

She knows magick is real.

The problem is, somebody else knows it, too.

Praise for BLACK MAGICK...

"BLACK MAGICK is that rarest of finds—a gripping page turner with the big, beating heart of a true drama. Full of superlative character work, mystery and mythology—not to mention the most inventive take on witchcraft in a long time—this book is far and away one of the best of the year. Rowan Black is a character I will gladly follow to the deepest, darkest corners of storytelling."

—SCOTT SNYDER (writer of BATMAN, WYTCHES, SEVERED)

"BLACK MAGICK...is a top-notch debut from Image... it delivers on character, premise, artwork, and ideas, a comic that can satisfy any reader looking for a great crime or horror story."

—COMICBOOK.COM

"...Nicola Scott turns in career-defining work with teases of color amidst gray wash. Hints, glints, gleams, and shadows of color balance the fantastic and unknown with the mundane and procedural... ★★★★★"

—COMIC BOOK RESOURCES

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ZONE